



IFPMA Comments as a contribution to the public web-based consultation on the Draft concept note towards WHO's 13th General Programme of Work 2019–2023

On behalf of the research-based pharmaceutical industry, the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA) welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the World Health Organization's (WHO) consultation on the Draft concept note towards WHO's 13th General Programme of Work 2019–2023 (GPW 13).

We welcome the Director-General's strong desire to identify initiatives for change, and the urgency with which he is seeking inputs on the conceptual framework for organizing the WHO's work, exemplified by the proposal to "fast-track" the approval of GPW 13 for May 2018. We applaud in particular the focus on outcomes and impact, rather than outputs, in assessing the performance of the WHO. We also support WHO's efforts in reinforcing the political leadership role they have, and wish to see the WHO fully utilize the unique position the organization has to place pressure on national governments to take accountability and direct adequate resources to health needs, which is a crucial ingredient to achieving universal health coverage (UHC) – a core strategic priority for the WHO.

We support the bold and ambitious move of WHO towards "doing things differently", through the six operating principles outlined in the draft concept note for GPW13. In particular, the need to set priorities and to focus on the WHO's normative and standards-setting mandate is paramount. We would strongly encourage WHO to maintain focus on health systems strengthening, as a fundamental element in delivering universal health coverage and to bolster the organization's role in emergency preparedness, which is central to the global health security agenda as a whole. In this context of global health security, whilst we were pleased to see some references to antimicrobial resistance (AMR) throughout the concept note, we would urge for AMR to be given much greater emphasis in the document, given its prominence as one of the major threats to global health. WHO has an unparalleled opportunity to drive the call to action on tackling AMR, and the current language in the GPW 13 concept note – stating "WHO will combat antimicrobial resistance" – should be strengthened in order to underscore the scale of the issue, as well as the pressing need for urgent action from stakeholders across the board, from our own pharmaceutical industry to the agriculture and fishing industry to healthcare professionals.

As a general observation, we welcome the reference to the need for collective action and multistakeholder engagement to meet the numerous global health challenges we face, and in particular the need to engage with non-State actors. It is important to highlight the benefit of engaging with a wide array of stakeholders in order to meet the goals of WHO, as it is clear that we will be nowhere close to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) without all relevant stakeholders being genuinely included and involved.

We therefore fully agree with the need for WHO to strengthen and expand partnerships as a key mechanism for achieving the SDG targets. We look forward to the newly-adopted FENSA being interpreted by the organization-at-large as an enabler – and not an obstacle - to WHO better engaging in productive collaborations, and to effectively addressing the numerous global health challenges we face at this moment in time.

We also support WHO's drive to foster greater innovation, and we would urge greater consideration of the private sector as a collaborator, to fully harness capabilities in innovation. Currently, the draft concept note is focused heavily on foundations and governments and we view the omission of the private sector and where it can best play a role as a clearly missed opportunity.

IFPMA supports the need for a coherent response in delivering concrete health impacts, recognizing that tackling most global health challenges requires effective engagement of other sectors outside health. Similarly, we agree on the need for WHO as an organization to be internally coherent and to vastly improve on cross-departmental collaboration, breaking down siloed approaches.

IFPMA, and its members, look forward to continuing and strengthening our longstanding history of collaboration with the WHO, particularly through the contribution of our broad scientific and technical expertise. Where possible and relevant, we will endeavor to provide support to ensure the WHO is fit for purpose and appropriately resourced to deliver on our shared objective for improved health outcomes.